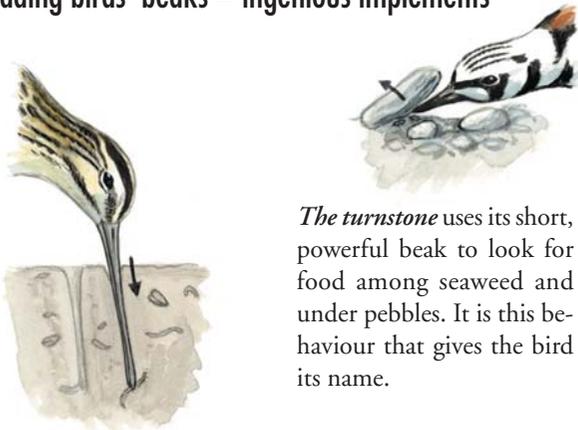


Wading birds' beaks – ingenious implements



The turnstone uses its short, powerful beak to look for food among seaweed and under pebbles. It is this behaviour that gives the bird its name.

The snipe searches for food by drilling into the mud with its long beak. It feels for worms and other prey with special sensory receptors on the soft tip of its beak.

The long legs of *the avocet* take it a good distance out from the beach where it looks for crustaceans and other small organisms by moving its upturned beak forward and back in a fast whisking motion.



The curlew's powerful curved beak is an excellent tool for picking lugworms out of their U-shaped holes.

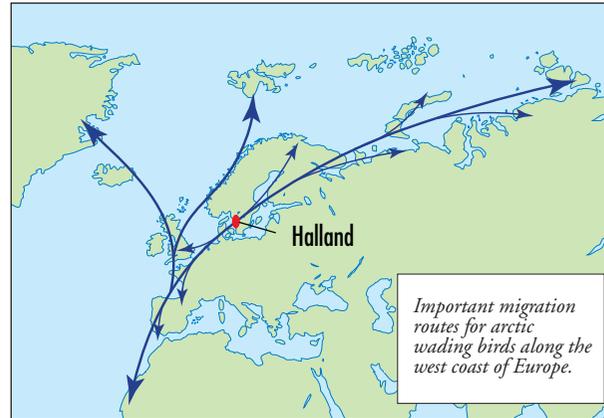


The oystercatcher's red beak is a powerful tool that is used to prize open live mussels and oysters. It is this ability that gives the species its name.

The Halland coast – between the Arctic and Africa

Some of Northern Europe's most important resting sites for migratory birds are to be found along the Halland coast. Wetlands, coastal salt marsh meadows and shallow lagoons offer food and rest for tired birds. This is where they can store up new reserves of fat so that they have the strength for the long journey to their summer and winter quarters.

During spring and autumn large flocks of wading birds roost on the shallow mud beaches and large numbers of ducks gather along the coast. The magnificent eider flight during April is a sight that is really worth seeing. This is only some of what the Halland coast can offer bird watchers and nature-lovers. Read on in this pamphlet for tips on superb bird sites and pleasant outings all year round excursions.



Important migration routes for arctic wading birds along the west coast of Europe.

More information

Getterön's Naturcentrum
Lassavägen 1
SE-432 93 Varberg
+46-(0)340-875 10
www.getteron.com

County Administrative Board
Halland
SE-301 86 Halmstad
+46-(0)35-13 20 00
www.n.lst.se

© Text and lay-out: Jonas Stenström. Naturcentrum AB, Stenungsund. +46-(0)303-69455. Water-colours: Nils Forshed.

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County Administrative Board's project manager:
Per Magnus Åhrén.

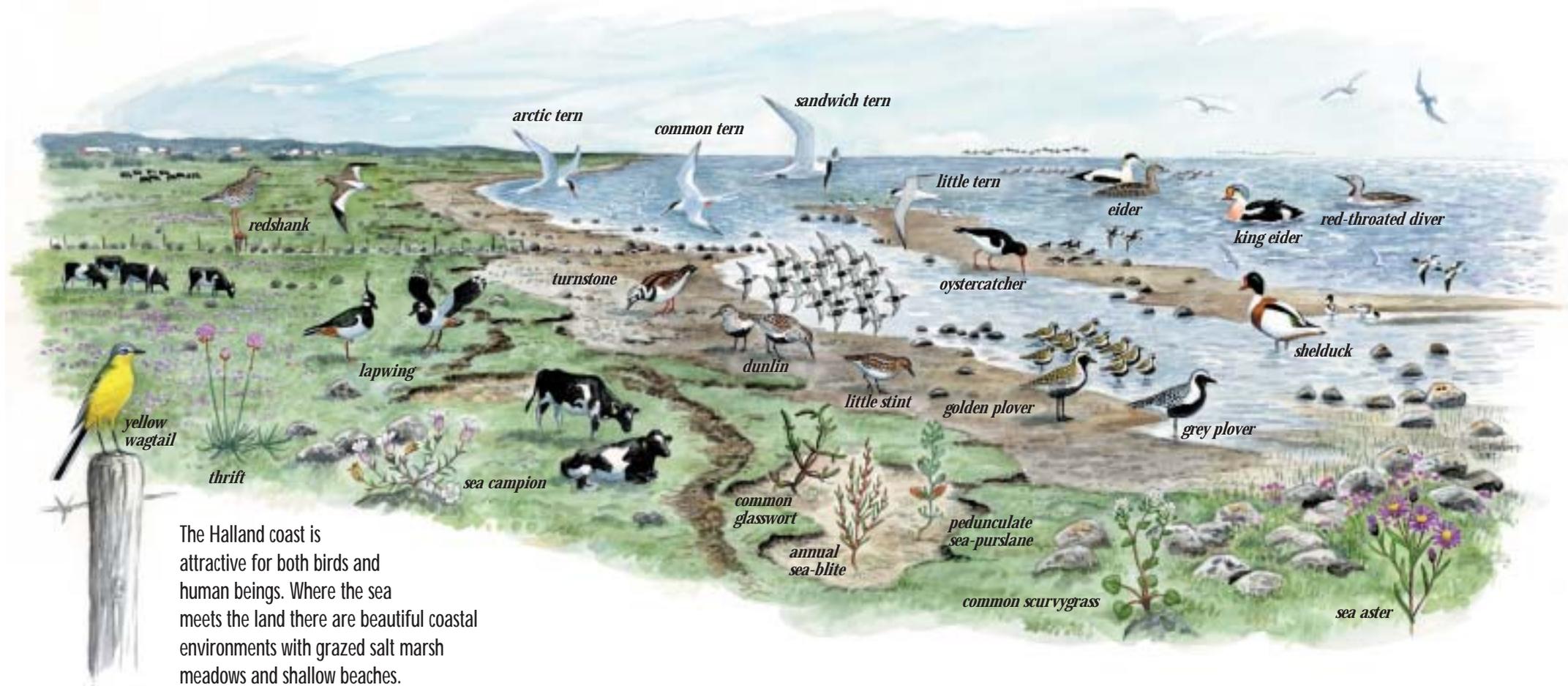


BIRDSITES ON THE HALLAND COAST



County Administrative Board
Halland

Nature conservation in
Halland county Sweden



The Halland coast is attractive for both birds and human beings. Where the sea meets the land there are beautiful coastal environments with grazed salt marsh meadows and shallow beaches.

Salt marsh meadows

Long stretches of the coast are bordered by extensive, grazed salt marsh meadows. Cattle grazing is an important pre-requisite for the animal and plant life of the salt marsh meadows. The grazing animals keep the vegetation down, and an abundance of nutritious insects live in the animal's droppings. Among other species of bird, the salt marsh meadows are home to *yellow wagtail*, *redshank* and *lapwing*. *The southern dunlin* also breeds on the very finest of the salt marsh meadows.

Coastal meadows are periodically flooded by the sea's salt water and this puts particular demands on the plants. Many of the plants have fleshy, succulent leaves that have evolved in order to survive in this environment. Some of the beach's most salt-tolerant plants are annual *sea-blite*, *pedunculate sea-purslane* and *common glasswort*.

Seaweed banks and mud flats

A large number of breeding and roosting birds are able to find food along the shallow beaches. Worms, mussels and other small creatures live in the soft mud. Crustaceans and large numbers of insects live in the seaweed banks.

Large numbers of migrating wading birds stop at this ready-laid table in order to stock up on energy reserves. During April–May, flocks of arctic waders are seen on route to their breeding grounds in the north. Many birds turn back as early as July, and the southerly flight of waders continues up to the beginning of October. *Dunlins* are the most common of the wading birds, sometimes with hundreds of birds in a flock. Other species that are often seen are *Temminck's stint*, *little stint*, *sanderling*, *turnstone*, *knot*, *curlew sandpiper*, *golden plover*, *grey plover* and others.

Sandbanks

Shelducks and *oystercatchers* look for food on the sandbanks off the beach. There is an abundance of small crabs, mussels and worms in the shallow, warm water. *Sandwich terns*, *little terns*, *common terns* and *arctic terns* are happy to rest out on the sandbanks after fishing trips further out to sea.

The Sea

Flights of birds continue over the sea all year round. *Eider* and other ducks fly together in larger flocks while diving birds and sea birds fly singly or in small groups. In the spring the eiders' flight south (!) is fantastic, with several thousand eider on a good day. *King eider* are a rare guest that are sometimes observed in the flocks.

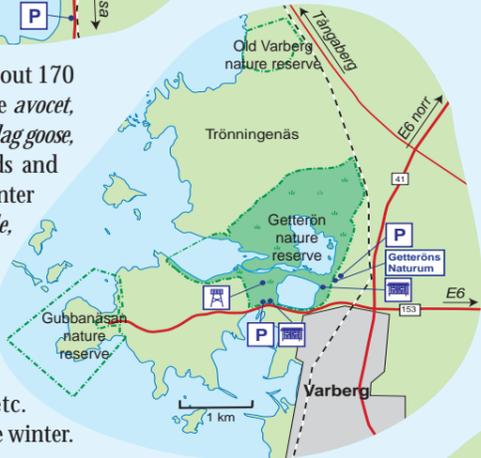
1 Tjolöholm

At Tjolöholms castle large numbers of breeding wetland birds are to be found on the periodically flooded salt marsh meadows. During spring and autumn Kungsbacka fjord is an important roosting site for wading birds and ducks. In the winter substantial numbers of birds of prey and flocks of *bean geese* graze on the salt marsh meadows and fields. Among other birds, *hawfinches* breed in the oak woodlands surrounding the castle, which is itself worth a visit. There is an impressive view, including the whole of Kungsbacka fjord.



3 Getterön

Getterön is one of Northern Europe's foremost bird sites with about 170 species regularly breeding or roosting. Among breeding birds are *avocet*, *ruff*, *black-tailed godwit*, *southern dunlin*, *redshank*, *little tern*, *greylag goose*, *bearded tit* and *yellow wagtail*. Large numbers of wading birds and dabbling ducks collect during spring and autumn. During the winter Getterön is frequented by species such as *white-tailed eagle*, *peregrine*, *smew*, *kingfisher*, *little grebe* and *bittern*. A total of 327 species of bird have been observed up to and including 2001. Getterön is a nature reserve and is well prepared for visitors, with several hides, a bird tower and observation huts. There is also a Naturum (visitor centre) on Getterön with a café, exhibition, sales of books and binoculars, conference premises etc. Naturum is open all year round, but only at weekends during the winter.



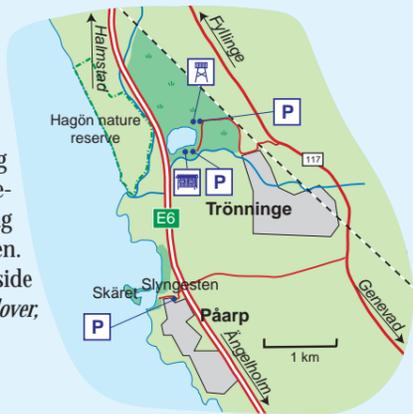
5 Morups tånge

Along with Getterön, Morups tånge is the west coast's best roosting site for wading birds. The area is most well-known for its excellent bay for waders, Korshamn, located in the southern part and where roosting waders can be studied at very close quarters during their migration. However a great number of birds are also to be found roosting in the north bay. During the winter Morups tånge is a superb location for flight passerines. Glomstene is a good site for watching sea birds with the chance of seeing *gannet*, *shearwater* etc. *Peregrine falcon*, *snow bunting* and *shore lark* are often seen during the winter.



8 Påarp and Trönninge

The wetlands on Trönninge meadows are South Halland's most important breeding site for wading birds, among which are *lapwing*, *redshank*, *curlew* and *avocet*. A large colony of *black headed gulls* is also to be found here. Large numbers of geese, dabbling ducks and wading birds roost during spring and autumn. A lot of birds of prey are to be seen during the winters. Breeding *tawny pipits* are to be found in Hagöns nature reserve, and in July roosting *whimbrel*. There is a good observation hut on Påarp's beach at Slyngestenen. Large numbers of roosting ducks and wading birds collect in the lagoon inside Skäret. Among the species that breed here are *redshank*, *oystercatcher*, *ringed plover*, *common tern* and *little tern*.



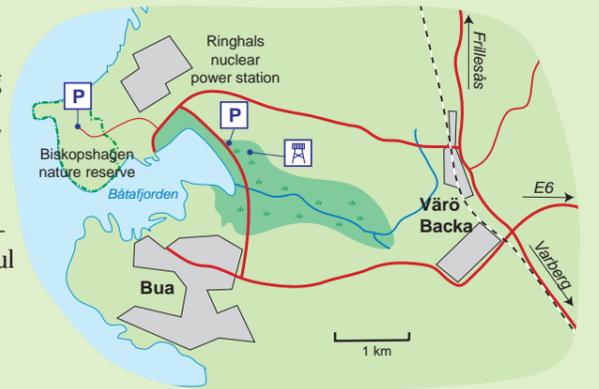
9 Lagaoset

Where the Lagan flows into the sea there is a wet grasslands in Hökafältet's nature reserve. Terns, ducks, whooper swans and geese roost in spring and autumn. *Bearded tit* breed in the reeds and on the heathlands toward the south *tawny pipit* occasionally breed. In April a large-scale flight of eider is seen from the west coast, inland in the Lagan valley and on towards the Baltic Sea and to the breeding sites further north. Thousands of *red-throated divers* are periodically seen in flight in May. The best place to see the early morning flight of red-throated divers is directly west of the beach hotel in Mellbystrand, which is also a site for sea bird watching.



2 Båtafjorden

The extensive salt marsh meadows within Båtafjorden are, along with Getterön, the west coast's most important breeding site for wetland birds. *Avocet*, *ruff*, *southern dunlin*, *black-tailed godwit* and *garganey* are among the breeding species that are to be found. A lot of unusual occasional guests have been observed. There is a nature reserve on the headland at Biskopshagen consisting of a coastal heath overgrown with heather and beautiful rock formations.



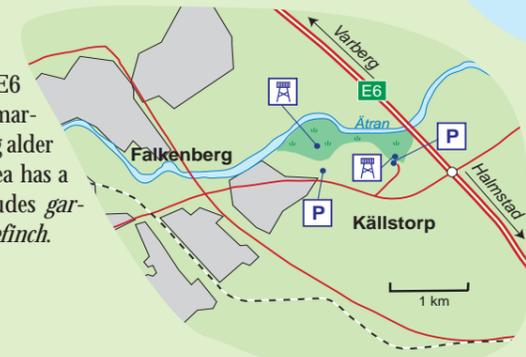
4 Galtabäck

Just north of Galtabäck's harbour is the shallow lagoon Lerjan, surrounded by grazed salt marsh meadows. *Northern lapwing*, *oystercatcher*, *redshank* and *shelduck* breed in the summer. During spring and autumn ducks and wading birds roost. Lerjan is an excellent location for flights of small birds in the autumn at times of easterly winds and *shore lark* is often seen in the winter. South of Galtabäck is a 10 km long coastal stretch with grazed salt marsh meadows that is an international Ramsa area. However, there is no organised car parking here.



6 Källstorp

Just south of Ätran on the E6 there is a wetland area with marshy meadows, reeds, weeping alder and artificial ponds. The area has a varied bird life which includes *garganey*, *marsh harrier* and *rosefinch*.



7 Busör

During spring and autumn wading birds breed in the bay south of Busör and ducks spend time in the water inside the reef. It is also a good place to see *gannet*, *shearwater* and other sea birds when the wind is blowing in a westerly direction during the autumn. *Shags* can also sometimes be seen on the Busör reefs during the winter. At Enet and Steninge-Stensjö nature reserve there are heather moors rich in juniper shrubs and rubble-stone fields. *Linnet*, *yellow hammer*, *green finch* and *white throat* breed in the copses. In Skipås nature reserve are groves of hazel with blue anemone. *Tawny pipits* breed in Haverdal's reserve, a few kilometres south.



§ Show consideration and follow directions

If you spend time in our beautiful countryside you must also show consideration. You may freely visit the hides and bird towers, but avoid going close to breeding birds and be aware of warning behaviour. In most cases it means that the bird has a nest in the vicinity. Entry to many bird sites is prohibited during some parts of the year, usually 1/4-15/7. Find out what applies by reading the signs and information. Dogs must always be kept on a leash in bird sites. Never walk through private land and only park in assigned places.



= car parking = hide = bird tower